

# CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

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VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1821.

NO. 49.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you—JOHN xiii. 34.

From the Universalist Magazine.

*For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.*

MR. EDITOR,—In your paper of March 17, I noticed a letter of ASAE L NETTLETON, purporting to be written by Jesus Christ, and requesting a company of youth to turn their dance into a conference meeting. This should not pass with slight remark, with short and hasty comment; “can such things come over us like a summer cloud, and hide our special wonder?” My duty in examining this letter shall be, to nothing extenuate nor set down aught in malice.

1. *Dear Youth.*—Although Mr. Nettleton calls the youth *dear*, yet they are not sufficiently precious in his sight to deserve a visit, unless they send for him to come and pray with them. To whom were these youth *dear*? not to Mr. Nettleton, for he would not go to their assembly, to expostulate with them for conducting in a manner which he considered wrong, without an express invitation. Did any *dear* youth send to heaven for Christ, before he came into the world? Did any angel entreat God to send the Redeemer? No, it was the spontaneous, the unsolicited charity of Jehovah, the great love which he felt for sinners, that sent Christ into this world. But to whom were these youth *dear*? to God, to Christ, to angels, and to all their friends.

2. I have come into your assembly this evening on an *important* errand. Whoever heard of Christ's going into an assembly of young people on an *important* errand, and communicating his message in *writing*? Instructions in the living voice come home more powerfully to the heart, than all the writings of all ages.—When Jesus expressly affirms that the words he speaks are spirit and life, one would not imagine he could descend to the cold formality of writing, when he came on an *important* errand: if he felt for the *dear* youth,

or intended to lead them into the path of salvation. Although Jesus knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man; yet he did not teach, saying, I have heard every word you have spoken, and seen every thought in your heart. But by telling people the deeds of their lives, and the meditations of their hearts, he made them confess he was the true Messiah. This was the way in which the Samaritan woman was convinced, when she said, sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet; and come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ? This was the way in which Nathaniel was converted, when he answered and said, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

3. I have come to inform you that my spirit shall not always strive with you. Christ never taught the sentiment this quotation is intended to convey. Although his spirit will not always strive with man, yet the reason will be, that man has submitted, and become in deed and in truth a child of light. Had Immanuel indicated the notion of this false Christ, he would have preached his own defeat, and have completely disproved his divine mission. Paul has assured us his master Jesus is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever: but if this Connecticut Christ is to be trusted, Paul followed an impostor.

4. It is evident that the Christ who wrote this letter is entirely unlike the Christ of the scriptures; for he neither uses the language, nor appears to be actuated by the spirit of God's dear Son. And it is not a little astonishing, that he has employed no expression that the Redeemer used, but in this the wisdom of God is manifest, for he is less likely to deceive. Simon Magus had as good authority to call himself the *great power* of God, and to affirm that he was the *supreme Deity*, worshipped by all nations, as this poor sinner had to call himself Jesus Christ. Very

little has been said about letters from heaven since the days of Peter the Hermit; but if this impostor succeeds, we may expect more revelations, equal in consistency to those of Mahomet.—Instead of informing these youth that he is their much grieved friend, let this wicked wretch fall on his knees, and ask forgiveness of God for denying the Lord that bought him, and taking the name of Jesus in vain. I have one word of caution, and I close my reflections on this impostor; beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

HERMES.

To the Editor of the Universalist Magazine.

SIR,—In the Universalist Magazine for April 7, which a friend of mine put into my hand a day or two since, I observe in your reply to “Amicus,”\* my name used, and a quotation from my controversy with you relative to the last judgment, to prove two assertions of yours; in the first of which you represent a certain class of ministers of the gospel as saying, “that if they were sure of eternal happiness hereafter, they would by all means live in sin in this life;” and in the second an individual preacher (by which I suppose you mean me, as you have given my name with a quotation) as saying, “if I were sure of happiness in a future world, I would live in sin in this; I would lie, cheat, get drunk, commit all manner of lewdness, I would even commit murder.”

To prove these assertions of yours, you make use of one argument, and one quotation. The argument is this: That such ministers as “say that the devil was the first Universalist preacher, and that he preached Universalism to Eve in the garden, when he said, ‘Ye shall not surely die!’” Such preachers as affirm that ‘Universalism’ is a licentious doctrine, that it naturally leads to

\* See Christian Messenger, p. 161.



all manner of sin"—do "impliedly say that they would commit all manner of sin themselves, if they believed the doctrine."

Now, sir, to use your own language to "Amicus," you are "hereby informed that you have made no small mistake." It is plain that the inference has nothing to do with the premises. These ministers always speak in the third person, and of those only who are under the dominion of unsanctified human nature. They believe, and have said, "impliedly" at least, that with *such*, Universalism is a licentious doctrine; because it removes the most powerful, and in some cases, the only restraints the vicious feel, and emboldens them to act agreeably to their evil inclinations. But that the belief of Universalism would have the same effect upon those who are *born of God*, they have, I believe, never said: and much less "that if they believed it, they *would* themselves by all means live in all manner of sin in this life." And I agree with "Amicus," that this I have never heard from the pulpit, nor read in any book, whatever.

That the sentiment contained in the quotation you have given from my "Vindication," relates exclusively to the unregenerate, you may observe from these words, "Now if his *inclination* lead him to commit it," &c. This is discriminating language, and could hardly have been mistaken had you observed the seven lines immediately preceding those you have quoted. See also my sentiment upon this subject in my "Discourse" delivered at the Chapel in Broomfield's-Lane, Nov. 27, 1818, p. 9, where, after exposing the licentious tendency of Universalism, you may find these words, "I speak not the language of the pious soul, who knows the comforts of religion, and rejoices in his liberty as a child of God, being set free from the bondage of sin, and the power of satan; but of those who know nothing of that comfort and liberty, and who *delight* in the drudgery of sin and *hug* their chains. These are the people who mistake in every thing. They call evil good, and good evil; they put darkness for light and light for darkness; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

Your mistake is the more to be regretted, as I think you heard this dis-

course, and besides it was printed in Boston a short time after it was delivered.

Now, sir, as you have given my name to the public, you will do me the justice to give this, my reply, a place in your Magazine, that the public may have the whole subject before them, and be able to judge for themselves whether my sentiment, or your statement be correct.

T. MERRITT.

Lynn, April 19, 1821.

#### REPLY.

SIR,—I am much pleased that you are willing to allow that Universalism may be believed by good christian people without injury to their morals; and that no christian can, with propriety, say that he would live in sin if he believed the doctrine. However, sir, I have heard many professors, and some preachers say this, and some of your order; but it was always my opinion that they spake rather from an angry spirit, than from due reflection. I must inform you that when the Compendium was written, you were not in my thoughts, nor is there any just grounds for supposing that I meant you when I spake of what a preacher of the opposition would say; nor should I have thought of what you wrote to me, had it not been suggested that a Methodist brother had sent the communication in reply to the Compendium.

I can hardly see cause, dear sir, to believe that one doctrine will not do for both saints and sinners. But am of the opinion that the same doctrine which is safe for a christian to believe, is likewise fit to hold up for the faith of the unbeliever.

#### Christian Messenger.

Philadelphia, Saturday, July 7, 1821.

Extract from the "Minutes of the Proceedings of the Western Association of Universalists, in the state of New York. 1821."

Pursuant to "Requests from the Societies of Smyrna, Henderson, Brownville, Otsego, Norwich and Auburn, for the fellowship of the Association—*Voted*, That the above requests be granted."

Pursuant to Requests from "Bros.

Oliver Ackley, Job Potter, Geo. B. Lisher and Samuel A. Skeele," to preach the everlasting gospel as contained in the promise made to Abraham, saying, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—"Voted, That the above requests be granted:" and those ministering brethren are accordingly received into the fellowship of the Association.

"Ministering brethren, present,	13
absent,	18
"Societies in Fellowship,	53
"Churches in Fellowship,	11

REMARK.—The Western Association is only one, out of four branches of the General Convention of Universalists; and this single branch now contains more societies, more churches, and more ministering brethren than the whole body contained but a few years since. From this branch has grown another branch also, called the Genesee branch of the Western Association.

Extract from the Circular Letter.

"It may not be improper here to make a brief retrospect of the past.—Scarcely half a century has passed since there was but a solitary individual in our free country that dared stand forth in defence of the Gospel. Opposed by learning, popularity and prejudice, nothing but the energizing influence of immortal truth could impel him to wage war against so powerful a phalanx. He stemmed, however, the torrents of abuse, and conquered the foe with love and forbearance. Here we might call to your recollection the time when a youth, alone, stood forth an advocate of unlimited and impartial grace in this section of our country. Opposition and bitter persecution have been the bestowments of those who ought to have been his friends. Popular prejudice and bigotry stood in one rank, emblazoned with disdain and confidence of success. Nevertheless, he trusted in God, who has crowned his labours with imperishable glory, and his bosom now glows with gratitude to that Being who has protected and blessed him.

"You, Brethren, will learn from our Minutes the increase of believers in Zion. Six new societies were received into fellowship the session past, and four were added to our number in the ministry. The fields are whitening for the harvest, and the fruit of the field



will soon be gathered. Do you need encouragement to labour in the service of our divine Master? hear the promise: "In keeping my commandments there is great gain." The eyes of man are upon you. Your daily walk and conversation is strictly observed; therefore live godly, soberly and righteously, and cause the world to say, "I find no fault in this man." Encourage the messengers of *peace and salvation*. Bid them God speed, and relieve their necessities. Live in love, deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God; "and above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."

*Brethren in the ministry,*

"The addition of labourers to our number, the rapid increase of believers in the gospel, and the joys experienced in believing are strong evidences that God is with us. It becomes then our duty as ministers of the grace of God, and labourers in a holy and righteous cause, embracing the salvation of all men, that we manifest our gratitude by increasing *engagedness* in the work of the *ministry*; cultivating among ourselves every christian affection and virtue that will unite us in the spirit of love, and obtain for us the esteem and respect of those with whom we sojourn. Liberality and kindness in private conversation and all public communications, becomes the followers of Jesus, adorns the gospel, honours and glorifies God, happiness the subject, wins the attention of our enemies and converts them to friends. Let us, then, brethren, dressed in the rich robes of charity, girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, and with these resist the portending evil, and quench the fiery darts of the wicked. Flee to God as a refuge in distress, to his revealed will for instructions, and to creation for attestations of his impartial and unbounded goodness. Listen not to the song of worldly ease and honour until she transforms you into beasts, but trample every worldly ease in the dust; brand the vitiated with ignominy; bid an eternal adieu to all superstitious notions, and proclaim liberty to the captive, the recovering of

sight to the blind, and the acceptable year of the Lord.

"Brethren, community has at length realized its freedom. It is now disposed to hear you proclaim the glad tidings of great joy. A spirit of candid enquiry now pervades our country. Let us then go forth in the name of Jesus, conquering and to conquer. Let us emancipate the wavering from the power of uncertainty and doubt, the fearful from the dismal cell of fear, the ignorant from the power of superstition, the miserable from the agony which attends them, and all from the doctrines of men, by pointing them to God for relief, and convincing them that he is their Father, Provider and Saviour. Engaged in the work of God, we should be perseveringly industrious. A field expanded as heaven, is ready for cultivation; God has prepared the seed, and we have the pleasurable and honourable task of committing it to the ground. That we may effectually do this work, let us form an acquaintance with Jesus and the Bible. The doctrine of God, the duty and final destination of man are therein plainly taught.

"May we one and all live conformable to the inculcations of the divine spirit, and walk in wisdom's ways, whose ways are pleasant, and whose paths are peace, until the "ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, obtain joy and gladness, and all sorrowing and sighing, flee away."

"All herein addressed, are commended to God, and to the word of his grace which is able to build them up, and crown them with endless and unfading glory.

BY ORDER.

GEO. B. LISHER."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.  
THE PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.  
Vol. I. No. 6. June, 1821.

As it was not our intention when we commenced the review of this work, to notice the sentiments of every article that appeared in it, but such only as should be interesting to us for their correctness, or call for our animadversion in consequence of their particular

opposition to the "soul redeeming gospel of Christ;" and, as among the original articles of the number before us, we find nothing coming under either of the above classes, excepting the Essay on "Keeping Secrets," by Dr. Ely—in sentiment with which, we perfectly coincide. We shall therefore proceed at once to the department of "Religious Intelligence," and take notice of some illiberal remarks contained in "A Narrative of the state of Religion, within the bounds of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church," &c.

In congratulating their constituents and religious brethren on the revivals which have, as they state, taken place in their Church, and of the numbers who have embraced its articles of faith, since the last meeting of the Assembly, it is observed—

"These subjects have been of all ages and classes, from eighty down to ten years of age. The old and stubborn oak, and the young and tender plant, have alike bent before the wind that "bloweth where it listeth." Scoffers, drunkards, and others of most profligate lives, have been made to bow at the feet of Jesus, and to own him as their Lord and Redeemer; and Infidels and Universalists have been humbled by the doctrines of the Cross, and warned their neighbours of the dangerous and soul-destroying errors of their respective schemes.

"The blessed effects of these outpourings of Spirit have been seen in giving a new aspect to the moral state of society: the multiplication of and regular attendance upon meetings for social prayer; and a growing liberality towards the support of the gospel and benevolent institutions throughout our land."

In the above sentence, the two following unjust, uncharitable, and false charges are evidently brought against Universalists as a body; viz. 1st. That they are not christians—have not been humbled by the cross of Christ; and, 2dly, That the doctrines of religion which they profess are destructive to the souls of those who embrace them. It is true our reverend revilers have not thought fit to bring forward a solitary argument, or proof of any kind, in support of these charges. And in this they have acted with much policy, for they very well knew, that had they attempted to prove their assertions true, in that very attempt, aided by all the specious sophistry they are capable of bringing to the task, they would have effectually made out their own refutation; they have, therefore, thought it now high time to quit the fruitless task of proving the doctrine of Christ and his apostles false, and have had recourse



in the room of argument, to general declamation, and an attempt to enlist the fears of the weak, the credulous, and the ignorant, against that which by reason and revelation cannot be overthrown.

Let us for a moment condescend to notice the uncharitable aspersions of our Calvinistic brethren.—Let us examine whether we are vulnerable, by these unchristian weapons with which they have attacked us.

In what respect can it be said that Universalists, provided they act up to the doctrines they teach, have not humbled themselves before the cross of Christ?—In what manner can the sentiments they profess be soul destructive? Upon what do Universalists found their religion? Upon the only sure foundation, the testimony of Christ and his inspired apostles: They believe all the doctrines contained in “the record which God hath given of his Son,” while they hold every thing which is not found therein, in respect to religion, to be of no divine authority. Every article of their belief can be expressed in the language of the scriptures themselves, a circumstance not true with respect to the doctrines of their opponents, and a circumstance which should, we conceive, in the mind of every rational christian, be a strong proof of their falsity.

Let us next examine what tenets Universalists do uphold, and then determine whether the insinuations of our religious calumniators, that in embracing them we do not bow to the cross of Christ, be it true or not.

Universalists believe with St. John, when by the voice of inspiration he declares that “God is love,”\* and that “in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.”† Universalists believe, as St. Paul testifies, that “God will have ALL MEN” (not, some men,) “to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth,”‡ and that there is “ONE GOD and ONE MEDIATOR between God and men, the MAN CHRIST JESUS, who gave himself a ransom for all” (not for a part) “to be testified in due time.”† Universalists fully believe in the further declaration of the great

\* 1 John iv. 8. † 1 John iv. 9, 10.—iii. 16.  
‡ 1 Tim. ii. 3—8.

apostle of the gentiles, that “GOD is the SAVIOUR of ALL MEN, especially of those who believe,”\* and that he hath “made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.”† And finally, Universalists believe that St. John spake true when he said, “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the SINS of the WHOLE WORLD.”‡ In these declarations of scripture, are clearly, expressly, and definitely set forth the peculiar tenets by which Universalists are distinguished from all other professing Christians;—those tenets for entertaining which they are reviled, and, as far as the law will permit, persecuted by those who have been pleased to set themselves up as the only true followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. Examine your bibles, and decide for yourselves.—We have not made up our quotations by patching together passages perfectly distinct and foreign from each other. Each declaration, it will be perceived, contains within itself a distinct and perfect proposition. Are these declarations true?—Are they the dictates of inspiration?—Do they occur in the bible?—If so, how can it be said, with truth, that they who believe in the doctrines they express, while they believe nothing which contradicts them, are not Christians—are not believers—humble believers in the cross of Christ? And how can any one who adheres to the truth, say, that these doctrines, which all who can read, may convince themselves are expressed in the very words of holy writ, are destructive to the souls of those who embrace them? To say so, is to declare that believers in the holy scriptures are not christians, and to accuse Christ and his apostles of propagating soul destroying errors. That Universalists believe then in the holy scriptures, the above extracts from that volume fully prove.—That they are therefore christians in theory, will of course follow.—Whether or not they are christians in

\* 1 Tim. iv. 9—10. † Ephes. i. 9, 10.  
‡ 1 John ii. 1, 2.

practice also, an examination of their lives will determine. Such an examination can be easily made—the result we fear not. We defy our opponents to prove by facts that Universalists, as a body, live less virtuous lives, than the most rigid of their own sects.

How many professed Universalists may have during the last year been converted to the doctrines of the Presbyterian church, we do not pretend to say. We very much doubt, however, the fact of a single individual who really understood and candidly believed the doctrine, having abandoned it; and not only abandoned it, but warned his neighbours against its soul destroying influence. We have heard of no such occurrence, and those who assert it, have not dared to point out the individuals who have done so—neither the state—the town—nor the church in which it took place—and until they do so, we shall look upon this, as one of those bugbears, which the united ingenuity of the General Assembly has devised to frighten the weak and the fearful to an adoption of their dogmas and traditions.

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TO BE CONTINUED.

## DEDICATION.

The dedication of the New Universalist Meeting-house, lately erected at Westminster, Mass. will take place on Tuesday, July 3. *Univer. Mag.*

On the 27th of May, the corner stone of a church was laid near Cherokee Hill, eight miles from Savannah. When completed, is to be open to all sects of christians, and to be called “The church of all denominations.” This noble undertaking, we are informed, springs from the liberality and benevolence of Freemasonry.

## BOOKS,

for sale at No. 58, Chesnut street.

COLUMBIAN MISCELLANY,	price	75
Ballou on Atonement,	- - -	1 00
Series of Letters by ditto, advertised in page 128,	- - -	1 00
Series of Letters, by do.	- - -	25
Kneeland's Lectures,	- - -	75
Johnson's Captivity,	- - -	50
Christian Messenger, vol. i. bound,	- - -	2 00
Kneeland's Definition Spelling Book,	- - -	25

A variety of pamphlets, &c.